1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

763 came into his eyes and they seemed to soothe the mother's pain.

She sat bolt upright by her son's side, arranged his clothes and cushions and replaited his long, thick tresses, which some words of jest about him and his beloved Tuēma. When she had finished, she left again, leaning on my arm, and from the threshold called out to her son that she would now send in Tuēma.

We had arranged a broad comfortable couch for Faris and partitioned it off with curtains; but one of them, according to the direction of the wind, was always drawn back, so that Fāris, resting with the upper part of his body propped up, could look out.

A smile of happiness mingled with surprise suddenly lit up his face. Tuēma had come in. She had paused at the threshold with a smothered cry and a look of horror in her face at her lover's helpless plight. But so quickly had she mastered herself that I hardly noticed her emotion, and Faris saw only a smiling face as she moved to his bedside. Her silver bangles tinkled faintly. "Faris! Faris! My Life!" she exclaimed, dropping on her knees; and, twining her arms about his neck, she stroked and caressed his face and body.

When she kissed him, I noticed that her mouth was stained with his blood; but she kept her lips firmly pressed to his, so that he should not see that blood was trickling from his mouth on to her neck.

●585 Shortly before sundown the tent began to fill with relatives and friends, who had been invited as witnesses to the wedding.

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Tuĕma had meanwhile returned to her own dwelling at the lower end of the valley. Her girl friends had been busy selecting the handsomest camel-litter and decorating it for the occasion. With its ornate marriage canopy it was mounted on a fine, gorgeously caparisoned camel, which slaves then led to Tuĕma's tent. There the bride mounted to her lofty seat between the slender horns of the camel-litter and, with songs and shouts and waving of scarves, her girl friends escorted her to the tent of the bridegroom.

Before the women's quarters, but so arranged that Faris on his couch could see everything, Tuĕma made her camel kneel down. Faris's mother and sisters, attended by numerous men and women slaves, greeted and received the bride ceremoniously.

Close by, Mnahi held an old white battle-mare by the halter. Auda, "the helper", she was called, and also the "Virginal Kuhaylat-Ajuz", for she had never been mated. The Ruala all but worshipped her as sacred. As a three-year-old she had been presented to Misha'il as a gift, on the birth of her son, Amir Fuaz. The mare was thus twenty-seven years old and her body bore the scars of many a raid. Over her back was spread a white lamb's-skin rug, the "Virgin Fleece" which, according to immemorial custom, the Bedouin bride brings to the bridegroom as a wedding gift.

Tuĕma had disappeared into the harem to be attired in her wedding dress by Faris's mother and sisters. When she came out again, she was resplendent in a rich cashmere gown woven in red and green (it had been worn by Faris's mother at her own bridal ceremony) and a

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gold-laced shepherd's cloak floating from her shoulders. She took her position beside the white mare; and an aged Bedouin, with a little lamb, only a week old, in his arms, stepped before her, laid the lamb at her feet and slit its throat as a sacrificial offering. Auda snorted and backed away from the blood, but the old man grabbed the halter and, dipping his fingers in the lamb's blood, painted the *Wasm* (tribal mark) of the Ruala on the mare's neck. Then he calmly passed his gory fingers through his white beard. The slaughtered lamb was given, in accordance with the custom of the Bedouins, to an orphan—a little girl selected by a *sheykh*.

Without accepting a helping hand from Mnahi, which he offered because of her trailing garments, Tuëma lightly swung herself on to the back of the white mare and at a walking-pace rode through the camp. The huge Negro strode beside her, holding over her head the great sword of Janda and Jidua and exclaiming, herald-fashion:

> "See ye the bride of Faris! See ye the virgin!
> O for Tuëma's eyes and Alya's grazing herds!
> O for the dark hero and his bride!"

Thus the procession made the round of the camp, all the inhabitants of which were lined up in front of their black tents and, as the bride rode past on her white mare, it was with a joyful "*Zaragbit*" they greeted her, even though their hearts were heavy within them.

Returning to Faris's tent, Tuëma dismounted, took the white lamb's-skin rug from her mare's back and spread it on the nuptial couch. Then she disappeared

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into the harem, to wait there until her bridegroom should call her. 585

Therewith the simple wedding ceremony was ended. We, who had been with Faris to witness the arrival of the bride, now rose to go.

The first stars were glittering over the hills when I stepped outside. The black tents in the valley melted into the deepening darkness of the evening.

The herds were wending their way homeward, their silhouettes now showing as they cross high ground, now sinking out of sight in the hollows. . . .

As my friends departed from the tent, each called out to Faris, according to Bedouin custom: "Vigour! And God be with thee!" [576]

Behind the partition that closed off the women's apartment Tuĕma was waiting for our going. When the last farewell was uttered, she pulled the middle tent-pole from its position and laid it on the ground. The roof bulged and drooped low in the middle, almost touching Faris's couch, but the lateral supports and the taut stays kept the rest of the tent fixed at about a man's height. It was the sign to any passer-by that a bride was with her bridegroom.

That night Faris died. When we came to his tent next morning, Tuĕma was lying unconscious beside her dead lover. 764

A stone's-throw from the tent a few slaves were busy digging his grave.

As we committed our dear brother, lying on the white

831 × 539 × [133 103]

Verse 1. 'Awde climbs high hills to see the route taken by his sweetheart, who prowls or creeps cautiously, *taḏebb*, to the channels in order to meet him without being observed. 2. *Ḳarm* is a poetical form of address, referring here to Ṛusna's father. 4. *Neṭâjel* is the earth with which a stone-covered grave is filled. The hill of Žijâl is 46 kilometers northeast of al-Ǧowf. 5. Ṭawîl al-Felǧ (the High One With Snow) is the name given by the Rwala to the Hermon mountains, which are covered with snow most of the year. Ḥâjel lies about six hundred kilometers southeast of Hermon. Bird and Rwâf are mountains about four hundred kilometers south of the Ḥawrân. 6. Ḥâmi Raṭîf rises beyond Tiberias. *Dannû ar-raḥâjel*, bring hither the female pack camels, is the order of the tent owner when he intends to move. *Meẓâkir* are the camels when laden with tents, utensils, and litters for the women. *Salaf* are warriors riding one or two kilometers in front of the laden camels. 7. *Enkîf* is the return from a raid without success and without booty. 'Awde will not desist until Ṛusna becomes his wife. 8. He who tries to drink from a wooden cup, but continues talking all the time, cannot pay attention to what he is doing, so that the cup often inclines to one side and the water is spilt. Then his comrades correct him with the words: "O So and So, the cup is tilted, *al-žedaḥ mutaṣâweren*." Likewise one who does wrong also bends, partly because he is ashamed, partly with intent to deceive. Abu Ṭamad makes straight or rebukes such a crooked fellow, *yeṣṣa' kill 'âjel*, and thus prevents injury.

THE WEDDING

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The wedding, as a rule, takes place immediately after the wooing. In the morning some one — even a slave — kills before the bridegroom's tent a she-camel, as a *ḏbîḥt al-'ars*, wedding sacrifice. Neither of the betrothed needs to be present. Towards evening a small round tent, *ḥeǧra*, is pitched by the women near by and the bridal bed made there. Among the poorer people a corner of their inhabited tent is partitioned off for the young couple. Two or three of the bridegroom's female relatives go to the bride to bring her towards sunset to the prepared tent. A little later the bridegroom also enters, after which the tent is closed altogether, *jeḥaḏḏeren 'alejh ḥeǧrateu*.

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There are no special wedding ceremonies. Part of the meat from the slaughtered she-camel is distributed among the members of the bride's kin and acquaintances, the rest is served for supper in the bridegroom's tent. Nobody is invited, nobody brings any wedding presents. There is no party, no dancing; neither the girls nor women sing or shout with joy. Often even the relatives of either the bridegroom or the bride do not know that there is going to be or has been a wedding. Neither does the slaughtering of a she-camel signify anything especially important, because an old or wounded animal is killed quite frequently. The tiny round tent, *ḥeǧra*, alone shows that there has been a wedding. But if it was put up at sunset and the camp moves elsewhere next morning nobody takes notice of it, except perhaps the nearest neighbors.

The morning after the wedding night the bridegroom goes to the men's compartment, *rub'a*, of his family tent, where he is saluted with the words: "Be blessed, may good be thy portion! *lâfi 'alejk al-ḫejr*." The bride is likewise visited by the women, who greet her: "Mayest thou bring good to thy cousin!" The young bride receives a gift from her father-in-law, then leaves the *ḥeǧra* to join the other women of her husband's family in the tent, although she need not work for seven days after the wedding. Her husband attends to his work as usual, also buying her trousseau, which consists of various blankets and rugs, as, for instance, the *bsâṭ*, wool carpet, *nasije*, thin fabric rug, *siǧâde*, prayer carpet, *lhâf*, European quilts, and of dresses and kerchiefs. The trousseau is given to the wife after, never before, the wedding night, *elja-'ras 'alejha*, and she is not obliged to return it.

If a widow or a divorced woman marries again, she is free from work for three days only.

When a man marries for the first time he stays with his wife for seven nights, but if he already has another wife he devotes himself to her also.

A young husband is greeted with the words: "Blessed be the tent! *mbârak al-bejt*," his answer being: "May (Allâh) bless thee still more! *bâreḳ lak bel-mubârak*." When speaking of a woman's husband the word *rafolha*, her man, is used; of a man's wife, *mrateh* (or *ḫurmeteh*), his wife; and the husband addresses his wife as *râ'ijet bejtena*, the mistress of our tent.

The Rwala usually have only one woman in a tent, seldom

721 Monday [or Thursday] which is always favorable to us, *bweğbet aṯ-ṯnên*."

They answer: "O Allâh, may success be our lot! May he grant us luck! *Já-lláh maksúm ḫejr allâh ja'ṭi as-sa'od*."

705 492 Then they begin to hunt for good camel bags, flour, water bags, and barley for the horses. He who means to go on his mare only seeks someone to carry his food supplies, *zammâl*. If he finds a camel rider who will do him that service, *jezmaleh*, he loads his supplies on the camel and himself rides in the saddle, while the owner sits behind. The mare runs beside the camel to which she is tied. But every owner of a mare generally has a camel of his own and is accompanied either by his slave or a younger relative. Those who ride on camels are always in the majority, and for long raids in the hot season none but she-camels are used. Horses are ridden mainly on short raids, undertaken in the time of *rubi'*. Nor can all the horses in camp be taken out—at least half must be left at home in order to repel a possible hostile attack. All the horses are shod before making a raid, and a few extra horseshoes taken to meet emergencies, *jetanaṣṣel ḫdûha*. They also sew up, generally with horsehair, the vaginas, *jeṣabberún al-faras*, of mares big with young, especially the older ones, in order to prevent miscarriage.

721 701 Old men and small boys must not go on a raid. They are left at home to guard the camp. However, a boy of twelve is old enough to join the raiders and may properly do so, especially in the *rubi'* season when neither thirst nor hunger threatens. In the hot months mainly men between 16 and 40 take part. They do not like to be accompanied by a young husband, *'arrís* (sic), in the first year of his married life. This time, called *ḫrûs al-'ars*, is not very favorable to important ventures, therefore it is better that the young husband should stay at home. No custom forbids men to have intercourse with their wives immediately before starting out, nor is it necessary that they should put on freshly washed clothes. Everybody usually leaves in the clothes he wears at the moment.

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721 The preparations for a raid take a considerable time. However, nobody ever knows definitely against which tribe he is going, for the simple reason that the Rwala always have several enemies at once. Only the most intimate friends of the commander-in-chief know his objective, while the rest of the camp is kept guessing. This secret it is necessary to